

**Brookline Commission for the Disabled**  
**April 22, 2014**

5:00 to 6:00 PM

5:00 PM Call to Order

Updates and notices from Chair,  
Eileen C. Berger



- Updates on Taxi medallions and discussion about next steps for BCD Jim Miczek
- Review of Accessible Housing for People with Disabilities
- Welcome to Saralynn and update on Committee Work on The Age-Friendly City committee -Town committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen
- Essex County Conference PWDs. May 20th **Building Partnerships Initiative 2014 Conference: "From Crime Scene to Sentencing, and Beyond: Addressing Crimes Against Persons with Disabilities and Elders"** Framingham
- MBTA conference Update from Wednesday, November 20, 2013 the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA will hold a regional symposium on transportation: the *Fall 2013 AACT/MBTA Forum*.
- Confirm accessibility of accessible voting places in Brookline for

5:55 PM

Reports and updates on BCD proposed and current projects; New Business/adjourn meeting Next meeting May 20, 2014

6:00 PM adjourn

*PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE AND THE BOARD RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CALL ITEMS OUT OF ORDER.*



April 2014

## 10 Things You Should Know about Housing

**1. Housing Discrimination Complaints.** Every April marks the passing of the 1968 [Fair Housing Act \(FH Act\)](#), which prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability and family status. This year's theme is "Fair Housing Is Your Right: Use It!" If you feel that your civil rights have been violated, you can [file a housing discrimination complaint](#) online with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The [FAIR HOUSING: Equal Opportunity for All](#) publication contains helpful information on the FH Act, housing protection for people with disabilities and families with children, what happens when you file a complaint and other related topics. Watch the provocative HUD-sponsored documentary, [A Matter of Place](#), which portrays the stories of three people who faced housing discrimination in New York City.

**2. Accessible Housing** refers to the construction or modification of housing that enables people with disabilities and senior citizens to live independently. Examples include lowered kitchen counters and sinks, roll-under stoves, widened doorways, wheel-in showers, grab bars in bathrooms, raised electrical outlets and outside ramps for people with wheelchairs or other mobility impairments. HUD's [Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST](#) initiative outlines [seven basic standards](#) that must be met to comply with the FH Act's design and construction requirements. These include both interior and exterior spaces, as well as public use areas. An Easter Seals brochure, [Easy Access Housing for Easier Living](#), contains a Home Adaptability Checklist, as well as a section that highlights common accessibility problems, such as narrow doors, and offers simple solutions to remedy them. Looking for accessible housing? [Accessible Space's website](#) can help you find rent-subsidized accessible housing for people with disabilities and seniors, age 62 and older, in certain states.

**3. Rental Assistance.** [Public housing](#) and other rental assistance programs, such as

“Section 8” [housing choice vouchers](#), often help seniors, people with disabilities and low-income families afford housing when owning a home is not a viable option. Since [income limits](#) for rental assistance vary from state-to-state, and even county-to-county, you should contact your local [public housing agency](#) to find out which options are available and if you are eligible. In general, there is no limit to the amount of time you can stay in public housing, as long as you follow the terms of your lease and your income continues to meet the eligibility requirements. Visit HUD.gov to learn about [government-funded rental assistance programs](#) or use the [Low-rent Apartment Search](#) tool to find privately-owned subsidized housing in your community. If you live in a rural area, you may qualify for help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Contact the [Rural Development agency](#) in your state to get started. In addition, some [Community Action Agencies](#) and organizations, such as [Catholic Charities](#) and [Lutheran Services in America](#), provide housing and rental assistance.

**4. Assistance Animals** are trained to do tasks or provide emotional support to ease one or more effects of a person’s disability. For example, a service animal may guide an individual who is blind, alert someone who is hard-of-hearing or calm a person who has post-traumatic stress disorder. In April 2013, HUD issued [new guidelines](#) that explain housing providers’ duties to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities who have assistance animals. As required by the [FH Act](#) and [Section 504](#) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, landlords may need to change their “no pets” rule to let a tenant with a disability live with an assistance animal, despite its breed, size or weight. A few years ago, the U.S. Department of Justice limited service animals to dogs under Titles II and III of the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#); however, this change does not affect the broader definition of an assistance animal under the FH Act. For answers to frequently asked questions, you can also visit Pet Partners’ webpage, [Service Animals and Housing](#). Topics include the FH Act and how it defines disability; types of housing covered and exempted; how service animals are categorized; and the rights of housing providers.

**5. Social Security Benefits and Living Arrangements.** While many people enter into shared living arrangements (e.g., roommates, group homes) to save money, if you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the amount of your benefits could be affected. Two sections of the Social Security Administration’s website, [Spotlight on Living Arrangements](#) and [Understanding Supplemental Security Income Living Arrangements](#), have information on why your housing situation is important when determining SSI. Possible scenarios are highlighted, including calculations that show how much your monthly benefit could be reduced. The article, [How Does Having a Paying Roommate Affect Collecting SS Disability?](#), offers basic information on the rules regarding income and living arrangements for people who are collecting Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). However, the best course of action is to [speak to a Social Security representative](#) about your situation. Call toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** (TTY: 1-800-325-0778) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.

**6. Homeless Assistance.** According to the [National Law Center on Homelessness and](#)

[Poverty](#), approximately 3.5 million people, including 1.35 million children, are likely to experience homelessness in any given year. If you are homeless or know someone who is, there are resources to help you. The [National Coalition for the Homeless](#) offers emergency assistance depending on your situation – whether you are currently homeless or about to become homeless. For help in rural areas, contact the USDA's [Rural Development agency](#) or a [Community Action Agency](#) in your state. The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans offers a [list of service organizations](#) in each state, but if you are a veteran in need of immediate assistance, call **1-800-VET-HELP**. **If you are a teenager** and thinking about running away from home or if you are already living on the streets, call the toll-free and confidential [National Runaway Safeline](#) at **1-800-786-2929** for assistance. In addition, you can visit [HomelessShelterDirectory.org](#) to find shelters and service organizations near you.

**7. First-time Homebuyers.** Buying your first home is an exciting step. At the same time, you may feel overwhelmed about making such a large purchase. HUD's webpage, [Buying a Home](#), or the National Association of Realtors' article, [10 Ways to Prepare for Homeownership](#), can help you get started. Tips include figuring out how much you can afford, requesting [your credit report](#) and getting pre-approved for a loan. If you are a first-time homebuyer, it is a good idea to use a realtor who can help you navigate the home-buying process and stay within your price range. Check out [12 Questions to Ask a Potential Realtor](#). You may also want to read HUD's [Looking for the Best Mortgage](#) booklet or use one of [Freddie Mac's Calculators](#) to see how different terms and down payments will affect the amount of your mortgage payment. In addition, [HUD-approved housing counselors](#) can give advice about which options might work best for you, as well as help you look at [homes for sale](#) from the federal government.

**8. "Aging in Place"** is a term used to describe the ability of adults to live safely and comfortably in their homes as they age, despite decreasing mobility. The PBS article, [Recommendation No. 1 for a Secure Retirement: "Age in Place"](#), explores some of the benefits. The National Institute on Aging's tip sheet, [There's No Place Like Home – For Growing Old](#), outlines the kinds of services and products older adults might want to consider when making the decision to age in place, as well as where to go for more information and assistance. Aside from [home modifications](#) that support changes in your mobility, [AARP recommends apps](#) to help you stay in touch with family members and age gracefully. In addition, the [National Aging in Place Council's](#) website allows you to search for [local service providers](#) or [support chapters](#) that can help you continue to live at home.

**9. Home Modifications** are sometimes necessary to make your home suitable to your needs and day-to-day living. To get started, read [the National Association of Home Builders' \(NAHB\) article](#) about things you should consider before beginning a remodeling project. Since all disabilities are unique, you may first want to evaluate which modifications you need. Consider this [Eldercare.gov fact sheet](#) or [Rebuilding Together Safe at Home Checklist](#), which list areas of your home that should be examined for safety, fall prevention and accessibility. If you would rather speak to a professional, the NAHB has a [directory of](#)

[Certified Aging-in-Place Specialists](#) who can recommend solutions.

Equally important, you may be eligible for financial assistance to help you pay for your home modifications. From government agencies to nonprofits, there are many organizations that provide [funding for home modifications](#) or volunteer services. Examples include [Area Agencies on Aging](#), [Centers for Independent Living](#), [Community Action Agencies](#), some [Habitat for Humanity](#) chapters and [Rebuilding Together](#) affiliates. Please keep in mind that the services offered by these organizations vary from city to city. According to a [MoneyWatch article](#), you also may be able to take a medical expense tax deduction for certain improvements or equipment installed in your home.

**10. Foreclosure** is a scary situation for anyone who is struggling to make his or her mortgage payments. However, there are a number of steps you can take before it's too late. HUD recommends that you talk to your [lender or loan servicer](#) immediately if you are having financial difficulties. Read the Federal Housing Administration's brochure, [Save Your Home: Tips to Avoid Foreclosure](#), to learn about prevention options. The [foreclosure process](#) is different in every state, so make sure you are aware of the [laws and processes](#) in your area. You can also call **1-888-995-HOPE** to talk to a [HUD-approved housing counseling agency](#). In addition, visit MakingHomeAffordable.gov to [get answers](#) to frequently asked questions about different [government programs](#) that may be able to lower your monthly mortgage payment. Another option is the [Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives \(HAFA\) Program](#), which helps participants sell their home through a short sale or Deed-in-Lieu of foreclosure. What should you do if you've recently lost your home to a foreclosure? [Freddie Mac](#) advises that your first priority should be to find housing. Once you do, you can then begin [rebuilding your credit](#). Visit HUD.gov for additional information on [avoiding foreclosure](#).

Don't forget to like Disability.gov on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) and use #disabilityconnection to talk to us about this newsletter. You can also read [Disability.Blog](#) or [Disability.gov's Guide to Housing](#) to learn about helpful programs in your community.

Read [past issues](#) of the *Disability Connection* newsletter.

## New Guest Blog: Working at Home in the Ticket to Work Program

## Boston WAV Taxicabs – Accessibility Inspection Checklist

<b>DATE:</b>		<b>LOCATION:</b>	
<b>VEHICLE MAKE/MODEL/YEAR:</b>			<b>YEAR EXPIRING:</b>
Medallion #:			
Medallion Owner:			
Phone:		Email:	
<b>ORIGINAL ACCESS INSPECTION OFFICER &amp; DATE:</b>		<b>ORIGINAL INSPECTION:</b> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>RAMP:</b>	Side Entry <input type="checkbox"/> Rear Entry <input type="checkbox"/>	Fold Out <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware/Tools: available <input type="checkbox"/> working <input type="checkbox"/>	Detachable <input type="checkbox"/> →
Measurement: Compliant:			
Slope [If height of the vehicle floor from which ramp is deployed is 3 inches or less above a 6-inch curb, slope should <b>not exceed 1:4</b> (36 CFR §1192.23 (c) (5))]:			
Length:			
Width [Should be <b>not less than 30 inches wide</b> (36 CFR §1192.23 (c) (2))]:			
Edge Protection [ <u>Side edges</u> of ramp should be <b>not less than 2 inches high</b> (36 CFR §1192.23 (c) (4))]:			
Other [Transition edges at top & bottom of ramp <b>should not exceed ¼ inch</b> (if vertical edge) <b>or ½ inch</b> (if beveled edge) (36 CFR §1192.23 (c) (3))]:			
<b>ENTRYWAY &amp; WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT AREA:</b>			
Measurement: Compliant:			
Doorway Height [should be <b>not less than 56 inches</b> (36 CFR §1192.25 (c))]:			
Securement Area Height [should be <b>not less than 56 inches</b> (36 CFR §1192.29 (f))]:			
Securement Area Width [should be <b>not less than 30 inches</b> (36 CFR §1192.23 (d) (2))]:			
Securement Area Depth [should be <b>not less than 48 inches</b> (36 CFR §1192.23 (d) (2))]:			
Wheelchair Securement Devices (Tie-downs or Restraint System) [should be provided in addition to lap/shoulder belts (36 CFR §1192.23 (d) (1))]:			

Wheelchair Seatbelts (Lap and Shoulder Belts):		
<b>OTHER:</b>		
Name of Garage where HP Modifications were done:		
Garage Contact Info:		
Inspector Name:	Date:	
CPWD Inspection By:	Date:	

## Boston WAV Taxicabs – Accessibility Inspection Checklist

<b>DATE:</b>		<b>LOCATION:</b>	
<b>VEHICLE MAKE/MODEL/YEAR:</b>			<b>YEAR EXPIRING:</b>
Medallion #:			
Medallion Owner:			
Phone:		Email:	
<b>ORIGINAL ACCESS INSPECTION OFFICER &amp; DATE:</b>		<b>ORIGINAL INSPECTION:</b> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>RAMP:</b>	Side Entry <input type="checkbox"/> Rear Entry <input type="checkbox"/>	Fold Out <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware/Tools: available <input type="checkbox"/> working <input type="checkbox"/>	Detachable <input type="checkbox"/> →
Measurement: Compliant:			
Slope [If height of the vehicle floor from which ramp is deployed is 3 inches or less above a 6-inch curb, slope should <b>not exceed 1:4</b> (36 CFR §1192.23 (c) (5))]:			
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Wheelchair Seatbelts (Lap and Shoulder Belts):		
<b>OTHER:</b>		
Name of Garage where HP Modifications were done: Garage Contact Info:		
Inspector Name:	Date:	
CPWD Inspection By:	Date:	

## FINAL REPORT ON THE BROOKLINE TAXI INDUSTRY

### I. INTRODUCTION

This report to the Town of Brookline is pursuant to the work order issued in P-11-09 to

broadly address the issues involved in converting the current taxi licenses in the Town

to taxi medallions. This first phase addressed each of the following threshold issues:

- 1) The current operating statistics of Brookline cabs;
- 2) The current make-up and financial evaluation of the license owners;
- 3) The current value of the proposed Brookline taxi medallion;
- 4) A structure plan for introducing medallions into the Brookline cab market;
- 5) An evaluation and discussion of potential implementation issues of the



- P. 11 Paragraph 5 All taxicab vehicles and operations subject to be American with disabilities act shall comply with the applicable provisions of said act

**Comment:** Sounds as though every cab is going to be accessible to wheelchairs. I think it should be worded differently.

• P. 15, Subparagraph B: ramps that are 30 inches or longer shall support a load of 600 pounds this is followed by “a ramp shorter than 30 inches shall support a load of 300 pounds.”

**Comment:** The 30 inch ramp will only support people that use a push chair and have no bariatric problems. The power chair I am ordering as a chair replacing my existing chair weighs over 300 pounds plus 170 pounds, my weight. My current chair, as well as most power wheelchair all are about in the 250-350lbs. area. This will prevent me from using that taxi thus increasing my wait or not being able to get transportation.

**Recommendation:** All ramps must support 600 pounds.

Page 21—regulations under dispatchers rules but I see nothing about having a WAV vehicle available 24/7.

**Comment:** This also brings me back to vehicles with different ramp types. If you have two types of vehicles with different ramp lengths and capacities, this indicates taxi companies I will require two wheelchair accessible vehicles on the road at all times.

Jim Miczek  
Brookline Disability Commission

1. Some of the definitions are a little bit difficult to understand. For example, different definitions for "Medallion" and "Tin" need clarification.
2. "Ramped Taxicab" and "WAV" seem to be used at least somewhat interchangeably throughout the regulations, although only the former term is included in the definitions. For clarity's sake, I would suggest using only one of these terms consistently throughout the regulations, probably "WAV".
3. It's not clear to me from the regulations how many WAV taxis you are going to end up with; it seems that nearly all of the vehicles that are on the approved vehicle list in Appendix 2 are accessible. Does this mean you're going to have nearly all accessible taxicabs?
4. Why give any one person/corporation the opportunity to own up to 50% of the town's medallions? This seems to be tempting a monopoly, or at least a duopoly. I would suggest setting the limit quite a bit lower, perhaps 25%, or even lower.
5. Under K. Vehicle Equipment Requirements, 9. WAV Requirements on page 15, I would suggest adding a requirement that, when the vehicle is on level ground, the wheelchair security area shall be level (not to exceed 2% in any direction). Some of the WAV conversions I have seen have the securement area pitched back, which makes for a very uncomfortable ride.

Eileen berger  
Chair BCD

I think the spelling out, i.e., Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle, and definition of 'WAV' should be included in the definitions listed on the first pages.

I thought 10% of the medallions were to go to WAVs. Is this correct? I didn't see anything about this in the draft.

Saralynn

**From:** Berger, Eileen [[mailto:eileen\\_berger@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:eileen_berger@gse.harvard.edu)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2014 9:56 AM  
**To:** Alan Balsam; [barbaraccg@gmail.com](mailto:barbaraccg@gmail.com); Berger, Eileen; Evelyne Milorin; [james.miczek@rcn.com](mailto:james.miczek@rcn.com); [o.sophia.johansson@gmail.com](mailto:o.sophia.johansson@gmail.com); [rcvben@verizon.net](mailto:rcvben@verizon.net); Robert Sneirson; Allaire, Saralynn J; [sarah.whitman@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.whitman@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** FW: Medallions and regulations

Dear Commissioners,

Please read the attached and send me your comments by thurs or Friday this week. I will be out of town next week.

Warm regards,

Eileen

Hello Eileen,

FYI, I ran into Nancy Daly last month and told her about our interest in seeing how the Commission might serve elders with disabilities. She suggested I attend an Age-Friendly City Committee meeting, which I did. Frank Caro and she are co-chairs. Please see Frank's follow-up note below.

I thought this would be a good place for me to start and have agreed to become a member of that Committee, as a link to the Commission.

Saralynn